



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

November 19, 2008

Background:

There are challenges in obtaining an Early Childhood Education Endorsement and/or Certification:

- Educational programs are ramping up slowly.
- Articulation agreements which allow for maximum flexibility for non-traditional students are not totally in place.
- Many staff in preschool teaching positions do not have the educational background necessary to qualify for endorsement or certification.
- Teachers certified for grades 1-3 may have been unaware of the endorsement/certification or necessary for teaching Kindergarten.

Recommendations:

First Things First supports the extension of Rules R 7-2-608 and R 7-2-614 Early Childhood Education Endorsement and Certification to 2012, with the following stipulations:

- 2012 is the final deadline.
- Arizona Department of Education be tasked with:
 - Conducting outreach to current teachers of grades 1-3.
 - Developing policies and procedures to reduce the financial burden of individuals in obtaining the endorsement/certification.
 - Working collaboratively with the Articulation Task Force to assure maximum flexibility for students to access the necessary coursework.
- The State Board of Education require regular updates on the progress of meeting the requirements of this rule by 2012.

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Amy Corriveau
Deputy Associate
Superintendent, ADE

☎ 602-771-5100

☎ 602-274-7040

🌐 www.azftf.gov

FIRST THINGS FIRST
Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board

4000 N. Central
Ave, Ste. 800
Phoenix, AZ 85012

To: Jan Amator, Deputy Associate Superintendent, Highly Qualified Professionals

From: Peggy Ellis

Re: Early Childhood Endorsement

Date: November 18, 2008

I am writing in reference to the upcoming deadline to meet the requirements for early childhood education. I am asking that you reconsider these requirements for many reasons.

I took my first college courses at a community college in 2001 with the intention of transferring to a university to obtain a degree in education. My goal all along was to teach kindergarten in a public school setting. I met with academic advisors every semester for six years to ensure that I was on the correct path. While raising two children of my own, I was able to complete the required coursework and graduated (Summa Cum Laude) from Arizona State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Education, Elementary Education in May 2007.

My DARS report (Degree Audit Reporting System) from ASU states that, "Students maintaining continuous enrollment at any public Arizona community college or university may graduate according to the requirements of the catalog in effect at the time of initial enrollment." At the time of my initial enrollment, Early Childhood was not even an option. I would like for someone at the state department of education to explain to me how I can fulfill the catalog requirements, graduate and become a certified elementary school teacher and yet still not be "highly qualified." Why is it okay for the state department to change the law in the middle of our education and not consider all of the students this change would affect? I am teaching my second year of kindergarten and have no desire to change grade levels. How can I possibly be qualified to be teaching right now if I won't be qualified in July 2009 after having taught kindergarten for two years? What message does that send to the parents of my current students?

I earned passing scores on the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessments (AEPA) in Elementary Education (09/16/06) and Early Childhood (07/07/07). I am currently enrolled at ASU in the Master's of Education Program in Curriculum and Instruction/Concentration in Early Childhood Education. My reason for seeking this additional degree is simply to obtain an endorsement in early childhood education. I am a firm believer that we never stop learning so I have no qualms about the courses I am taking, even though they take up most of my family time. My current students are benefiting from the strategies I am learning about and implementing in my classroom; however, I believe it is unfair to me, and many others in my situation, to be required to complete a minimum of four semester hours in supervised field experience, practicum, internship or student teaching setting serving children birth – preschool. I have absolutely no interest in teaching preschool and I am required to spend five weeks this coming summer doing exactly that, and without compensation. By the time I finish this degree I will have spent nearly \$10,000 more in tuition simply because it is my desire to continue teaching kindergarten.

While I fully support continuing education, especially for teachers, I believe our lawmakers are making a huge mistake. The state of Arizona cannot afford to lose good teachers. Your support is urgent. I am appealing to you to reconsider these requirements and accept the proposed amendments for the Early Childhood certificate and the Early Childhood endorsement.

Sincerely,
Peggy Ellis
7165 W. Camino De Oro Drive
Peoria, AZ 85383
623-561-8254

Yanez, Vincient

From: Corriveau, Amy
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2008 1:47 PM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: FW: ECD Certification extension

Forwarding for your information.

amy

From: robin hodo [mailto:robinhh8@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2008 7:17 PM
To: Corriveau, Amy
Subject: ECD Certification extension

Mrs. Corriveau,

I am emailing you in regards to the meeting scheduled tomorrow to extend the ECD certification requirements. I am graduating in May 2009 and I am a 40 year old single mother of two children who has struggled for four years to attend college, while working full time and raising my children so I can receive a BA in Early Childhood Education. I have done my homework at swim meets, Tae Kwon Do lessons, in airports, on Thanksgiving Day, and even on the one and only vacation I have ever taken. I have done everything I can to ensure I receive the best possible education so I can be the best, most effective teacher I can be. Now I am finding out that it may be all for nothing. The sacrifices my family and I have made, the sleepless nights doing homework, and working without a day off for 16 straight weeks at a time so I can attend school and still feed my family. Please do not allow an extension to go through. the teachers that this extension will effect has known about the existing deadline and has chosen to do nothing to rectify their situation. Do not punish the children who deserve well-trained, motivated teachers or the wonderful, dedicated men and women who have done everything they can to comply with the needed requirements to be an Early Childhood Educator. I am not in it for the money, if I was, I would have chosen another profession. I am in it for the children, are you?

Thank you very much,
Robin Hodo

NOTICE: This e-mail (and any attachments) may contain PRIVILEGED OR CONFIDENTIAL information and is intended only for the use of the specific individual(s) to whom it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged and confidential under state and federal law. This information may be used or disclosed only in accordance with law, and you may be subject to penalties under law for improper use or further disclosure of the information in this e-mail and its attachments. If you have received this e-mail in error, please immediately notify the person named above by reply e-mail, and then delete the original e-mail. Thank you.

Yanez, Vincient

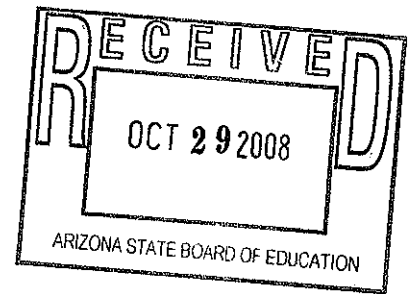
From: Kevin J. Mendivil [kjmendiv@mpsaz.org]
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2008 1:21 PM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: ECE Certificate/Endorsement

Hi Vince,

Unfortunately, MPS will not have a representative at the public hearing on this topic. Mesa Public Schools believes it is in the best interest of our current early childhood teachers/student teachers to extend the ECE certification/endorsement requirements to July 1, 2012. This would help many individuals to receive the appropriate training and/or classes to better equip them in this teaching category.

Kevin J. Mendivil, Ed.D.
Director of Certificated Personnel
Mesa Public Schools
480-472-0403

P.O. Box 50010
Parks, AZ. 86018



Mr. Vince Yanez
1535 W. Jefferson Bin11
Phoenix, AZ. 85007

Dear Mr. Yanez:

I am the Early Childhood Director at Maine Consolidated School. I am concerned about the Early Childhood Endorsement or certification that is now required as of July 2009. I am requesting that the board extend the deadline date to July of 2012. I am also requesting that the board reconsider the decision to require such an endorsement. I do think that the board or the existing licensing should have higher qualification for all positions that pertain to preschool education. For example: Director should have 24 credits in early childhood education and an administration class plus experience. Teacher should have 12 credits ECE plus experience and teacher Aide 6 units ECE. I think the requirements for these positions need to be raised. My other concern is that if you raise the qualifications too high that preschools such as ours will be shut down because we would not be able to pay the wages of a credentialed or certified teacher in this position. We live in a rural area and this is the second school year that we have had our preschool in operation. Our board decided to create the preschool to meet a need in the community, but to also have a way to identify our at risk children in our community. Last year we were able to identify 5 new special needs children in addition to our existing 3 children that were already receiving services.

My fear is that in an attempt to make the qualification for a preschool teacher higher, you could cause many preschools to shut down because they would not be able to pay the wages for that teacher. If you choose to have these qualifications, will you also consider supplementing the salary for a teacher with an endorsement or certificate? For now, if you extend the date it will give more time to really look at this subject without feeling the pressure to make a decision right now.

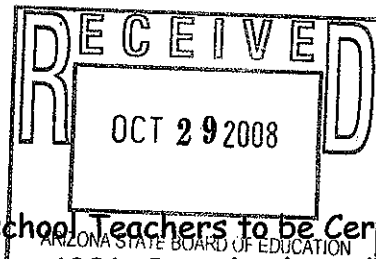
Thank you for considering both of these concerns!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori D. Zink".

Lori Zink- Early Childhood Director

Dear Mr. Vince Yanez,



10-26-08

I am writing in regards to "All Preschool Teachers to be Certified by 2009". I have been a preschool teacher since 1981. Preschool teaching is my job, but more than anything it is my passion. I believe early childhood education is the best start for our preschoolers. Deer Valley Unified School District has been very successful and helpful with the education of our preschool programs. DVUSD provides and requires monthly staff development to the Community Education programs.

After 27 years of being in the preschool profession, I attend required classes and seminars. I understand the importance of continuing education, but feel that a postponement should be highly considered for preschool teachers at this time, if Arizona plans to change the requirements for preschool teachers. We will lose many highly qualified, wonderful, caring teachers, who cannot afford to attend college full time or part time. An extension should be considered to help staff become qualified, if the state wants a change for continuing education.

The financial impact of the 2009 requirement should be considered. Hiring certified teachers will add a considerable cost to the preschool programs. A low pay scale for certified preschool teachers will reduce the quality of the preschool programs as the staff will leave the program for greener pastures. The community preschool is a pay for program. Each and every one of us has felt the impact of the recent financial turmoil. Any increase in the program fee to pay for certified teachers, will certainly lead to fewer students as parents choose to spend their money elsewhere.

Please, consider extending the continuing education early certification requirements with many loving people in mind.

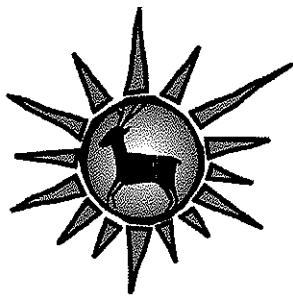
Sincerely,

Sheilla Johnson

Arrowhead Elementary

Community Education

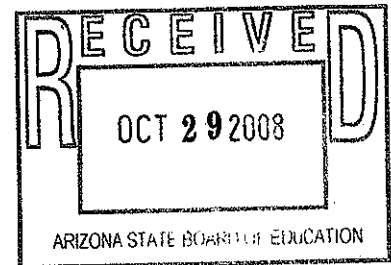
Pre-Kindergarten Teacher



Deer Valley Unified School District No. 97

20402 N. 15th Avenue ♦ Phoenix, AZ 85027-3636 ♦ Phone (623) 445-5018 ♦ Fax (623) 445-5092

Community Education



October 22, 2008

Mr. Vince Yanez, Executive Director
1535 West Jefferson, Bin 11
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Early Childhood Teacher Certification Deadline Extension

Dear Mr. Yanez,

The Community Education program with Deer Valley Unified School District has been offering community based preschool programs dating back to 1992. It has grown over the past 25 years into a well respected program in our district serving over 350 students annually. Our 45 teachers and assistants come from a variety of backgrounds and experience. They are an asset to our community and the children that they work with. With so many programs running in our district, we feel the extension on teacher certification will help our diverse staff meet the goal of certification easier.

- An extension will allow colleges in our area the necessary time to prepare and schedule enough classes to meet the demands of the certification process.
- By offering an extension, it allows our teachers to spread the financial burden of this process out over a longer period of time.
- Most of our staff will need to work while they attend classes. With such a busy schedule along with managing a family, our people will be able to budget their time a little easier by having more time to become certified.
- The additional cost of hiring certified teachers will greatly impact our program. Having more time to put a strategic plan together to accomplish this will help us out and the savings of having to incorporate this immediately will be passed on to the families.

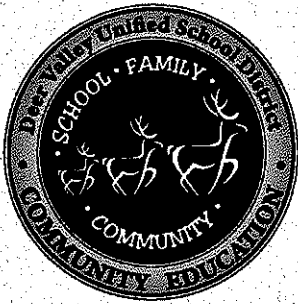
Our goal in Deer Valley is to improve the quality of preschool programs and believe that the Department of Education has that common goal. Allowing us the extra time to get our people certified will help us accomplish this. In addition, the people we have depended upon and trusted all of these years will be able to remain in their positions and make our programs that much better.

Eva Harlow

Deer Valley Unified School District
Community Education/Program Supervisor

Superintendent
Dr. Virginia McElyea
Governing Board

Christy Agosta ♦ Ron Bayer ♦ Tom Boone ♦ Michael Gregoire ♦ Bill Maas

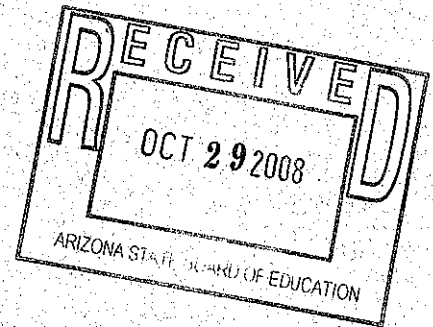


DVUSD Community Education

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www.dvUSD.org/communityed

October 17, 2008

Mr. Vince Yanez, Executive Director
1535 West Jefferson, Bin 11
Phoenix, AZ 85007



RE: Early Childhood Teacher Certification Deadline Extension

Dear Mr. Yanez,

Deer Valley USD Community Education respectfully requests that the Arizona Department of Education extend the Early Childhood Teacher Certification deadline from July 1, 2009 to July 1, 2012. We currently serve over 350 preschool students under the instruction of 45 preschool teachers and assistants. We believe the extension is crucial to our staff for the following reasons:

- It is very difficult and stressful to work full time, attend school, and maintain a normal family life. Extending the deadline will enable current non-certified preschool staff additional time to complete their education while attempting to maintain a healthy balance.
- Financially an extension reduces the immediate burden of tuition costs by allowing a longer period of time to complete the coursework, making the end result "teacher certification" more attainable.
- An extension will allow colleges and universities the additional time necessary to prepare and schedule classes to meet the needs of a working population of non-certified preschool staff.
- With the current economy, the additional cost of hiring certified teachers in a self-funded program will have a severe impact on the tuition that is charged, therefore running the risk of children not receiving the vital services that affordable Community Education programs such as ours provide.

If the goal of ADE is to improve the quality of preschool programs throughout the state, I am confident that the ADE Board will consider the impact of moving too quickly and risking the loss of our current pool of experienced preschool staff, thus limiting the number of programs offered.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Ervin
Manager of Community Education
623-445-5018
Fax 623-445-5092
Barbara.Ervin@dvUSD.org

Superintendent
Virginia McElyea, Ed.D.

GOVERNING BOARD

Christy Agosta ♦ Ron Bayer ♦ Tom Boone ♦ Michael Gregoire ♦ Bill Maas

Yanez, Vincient

From: Christina Strauss [ch Strauss@wickenburg.k12.az.us]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2008 8:53 AM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: Early childhood

Hello Mr. Yanez,

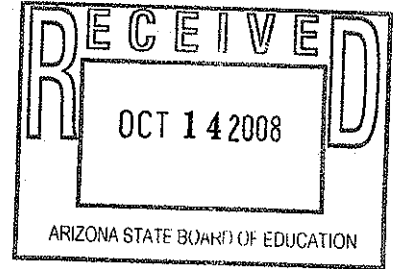
My name is Christina Strauss, and I am a kindergarten teacher in the Wickenburg School District at Festival Foothills Elementary. I was told that the new requirements for Early Childhood teachers were being considered for delay and that public comments were being taken. I qualify for the grandfathering clause except that I moved to Arizona in 2007 and applied for my teaching certificate in 2008. Otherwise, I have the experience and education, and am very upset that I may not be able to teach kindergarten again next year due to the fact that I do not have time to complete the needed classes for an early childhood endorsement. I would be grateful for an extension. This would allow me to continue to teach the grade I love while having time to complete the necessary classes for an early childhood endorsement. Many in our school are upset about the possible changes because if the other Kindergarten teacher, who is in the same situation, and I cannot teach Kindergarten, then we will have to move to another grade. Two teachers in our school who have early childhood degrees but do not want to teach Kindergarten will have to teach Kindergarten. It makes me sad that people who want to teach Kindergarten and are qualified by the grandfathering clause will not get to teach Kindergarten. Please consider delaying this requirement and informing educators of the upcoming changes. I have my reciprocal certificate with the state of Arizona but was never made aware of these changes until I heard it through the grapevine recently. Please delay these requirements so that those of us who want to continue to teach Kindergarten will have time to make the necessary changes. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Christina Strauss
Kindergarten Teacher
Festival Foothills Elementary

**ACCA****ARIZONA CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION**

October 10, 2008

Mr. Vince Yanez, Executive Director
Arizona State Board of Education
1535 West Jefferson Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007



Dear Mr. Yanez,

I am writing to provide public comments on the early childhood education certification rule on behalf of the Arizona Child Care Association (ACCA).

ACCA believes that the certification requirements that are currently in rule and the modifications that are being proposed are in direct conflict with ARS 15-1251 and the intent of the statute as they apply to private preschools funded under the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG). In addition, we do not believe that the impact on parents, pupils who attend private preschools, and non-profit and for profit centers that provide these services was adequately considered.

In 1994 the legislature allowed private licensed child care centers to receive funding and participate in the preschool program. The statute requires school districts to "allow at least up to 50% of pupils" to receive preschool services from a federally funded or private child care provider of their parent's own choosing. The only statutory requirements are that the provider be licensed by the DHS Office of Child Care Licensure and nationally accredited.

The statute allows any eligible provider that meets these two requirements to participate in the program if they are in or near the district and are willing to provide services at costs similar to that paid to others. The statute specifies that districts must limit their contracts with private providers to financial agreements. It is clear that the legislature intended the program to allow parental choice of private providers who met the explicit statutory requirements. The requirement for teacher certification will add an additional condition for participation that is not authorized in the statute.

A requirement to hire certified teachers will pose an insurmountable barrier for most private preschools who cannot afford the additional costs associated with hiring certified teachers. Public school and federally funded Head Start programs are already able to pay teachers 65% more than private providers who rely on parent fees or DES. The vast majority of private centers have a small number of ECBG funded children, with half of the private preschools serving 2 or fewer children. Parents of the other private pay and DES subsidized children are not able to afford the additional costs to offset the requirement to hire a certified teacher.

2100 North Central Avenue Suite 225, Phoenix, Arizona 85004-1400

Phone: 602.252.3845

Fax: 602.252.8664

E-mail: bruceliggett@azcca.org

Website: www.azcca.org

Loss of the ECBG funded children will reduce revenue in private child care centers impacting the overall operation and quality of the preschool. A requirement for teacher certification in private preschools will effectively preclude private participation in the program.

The ECBG preschool program only serves children from low income families. These parents will lose preschool options and choices of settings that meet their family needs in terms of curriculum, location, hours of operation that support the parent's work schedule, and care for siblings.


ACCA has already identified a number of procedural requirements and administrative restrictions at the local level that are barriers for private provider participation. In 2007, only 9 of the 54 districts that used ECBG funded preschools used private preschools and less than 4% of all ECBG funded preschool children were served in private preschools. ADE has attempted to address these issues but has limited authority and resources to monitor, provide oversight or enforce all aspects of the statutory provisions for private preschool participation. If teacher certification were added as a requirement, it is not clear how districts would comply with the statutory requirements for districts to notify private providers and provide parents with a list of private providers located in the district.

We believe that the proposed modification to extend the effective date of the early childhood certification provides an opportunity for the State Board of Education to review the ECBG statutory language and intent, more fully explore the impact of the proposed certification requirement on stakeholders including pupils, parents, and private providers, and reconsider the certification requirement for private providers.

ACCA supports the provision of quality preschool services and the right of parents to choose the preschool program that best meets their family's needs. While teacher certification should not be required for private preschools, as an alternative, perhaps the Board could require or encourage districts to provide increased funding and a sufficient number of children as an incentive for private preschools to hire certified teachers.

Your consideration of these issues is appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any clarification or additional information.

Sincerely,



Bruce Liggett
Executive Director

cc: Jennifer Pollard, Assistant Attorney General
Amy Corriveau, ADE

"The Arizona Child Care Association is a professional non-profit organization of licensed private non-profit and proprietary child care centers. The ACCA mission is to promote accessible, affordable, and quality early care and education that meets the needs of Arizona's families and children."

2100 North Central Avenue Suite 225, Phoenix, Arizona 85004-1400

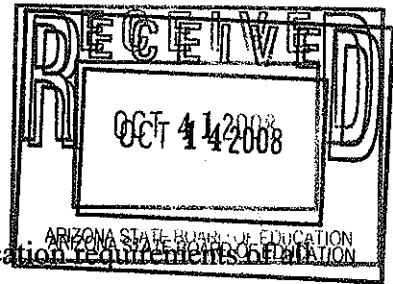
Phone: 602.252.3845

Fax: 602.252.8664

E-mail: bruceliggett@azcca.org

Website: www.azcca.org

October 7, 2008



Dear Vince Yanez,

My name is Debra McClellan and I'm in favor of extending the certification requirements for preschool teachers from July 1, 2009 to July 1, 2012.

I started teaching at a private preschool in September 1980. I began teaching in Community Schools for the Deer Valley Unified School District in September 1992. I opened the first Community Preschool in Deer Valley Unified School District at that time. These preschools were designed for the three and four year olds. I'm extremely proud of our preschool programs that are offered through the Deer Valley Unified School District, Community Education Department.

This extension would allow non-certified preschool teachers to complete their education while they continue to work at the job they take pride in everyday. It would also allow working preschool teachers to find Community Colleges and Universities that have classes offered at times they can attend. This much-needed extension would give time for those seeking financial assistance and opportunity to complete their educational goals.

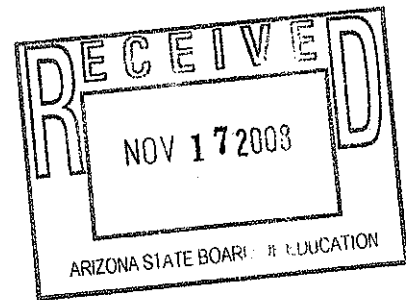
As I write this request for the 2012 extension, I wonder how those who wish to continue their education will be able to afford these costs under the current economy we are experiencing. Truly the only responsible solution is a delay for the certification requirement.

Sincerely,

Debra B. McClellan

Debra B. McClellan

*Caroline E. Novak
3837 East Carol Ann Way
Phoenix, AZ 85032*



November 10, 2008

Dear Mr. Yanez,

I am writing this letter as an Arizona educator in need of your assistance. My name is Caroline Eggert Novak and I teach kindergarten at Anasazi Elementary School in Scottsdale Unified School District #48.

I began my educational endeavors in Arizona back in 2001 when I came from the East Coast to attend Arizona State University. I received a Bachelors Degree from Arizona State in 2005, and decided to continue my education by attending Northern Arizona University. I received a Master of Education degree in Elementary Education in December of 2006. In January 2007 I received my teacher certificate through the Arizona Department of Education.

I interned and completed my student teaching semester in a kindergarten classroom, and then taught kindergarten for the 2007-2008 school year and I am currently teaching kindergarten during the 2008-2009 school year. It has become my passion! However, I have recently been informed that there is an Early Childhood Endorsement that I must attain by July, 2009 in order to continue teaching kindergarten. There are many reasons that I am having a difficult time with this new educational enforcement.

One problem that I have with this endorsement is how much is being asked of teachers who would like to teach kindergarten. The list of qualifications for the endorsement is long, costly and unattainable for many. Here is why; the endorsement states that those teachers who would like to receive the endorsement must take twenty-one credit hours of classes in Early Childhood Education, spend four semester hours student teaching in a birth-pre school classroom and four semester hours student teaching in a kindergarten-grade three classroom. I am not sure how any teacher would have time to do these things on top of teaching all day.

In order for a teacher to be exempt from attaining this endorsement and still be qualified to teach kindergarten, one has to have a valid teaching certificate as of July 1, 2006 and "have a minimum of three years infant/toddler, preschool or kindergarten-grade three classroom teaching experience within ten years prior to July 1, 2009." Additionally one has to have a passing score on the Early Childhood Subject Knowledge portion of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment (AEPA). www.azed.gov/certification. I am not exempt from having to get this endorsement for two reasons; the first is that I received my teaching certificate in January, 2007, and secondly that I will have only been teaching

kindergarten for two and a half years when the deadline of July, 2009 is upon us, not three years as stated necessary for exemption.

I am displeased that the Arizona Department of Education is enforcing this endorsement. I have a Masters Degree in Elementary Education where I am certified K-8, and somehow this is still not enough. I have also taken the Early Childhood Subject Knowledge Test and passed it. I currently have twenty-eight thousand dollars in loans from graduate school and I simply cannot spend more time and money on certification hurdles. Financially, this is not feasible for me to do. I feel that having a Masters Degree should exempt me from having to get this endorsement. Not only that, but at the end of this school year I will have had two years experience teaching kindergarten, as well as a semester student teaching in kindergarten, and another semester long-term substitute teaching in a kindergarten classroom. I feel that I am more than qualified to teach kindergarten, and maybe even more sufficiently qualified than other teachers who will be exempt from the endorsement due to the fact that they taught for one half a year longer than I did, or that they received their teaching certificate six months before me.

The cut-off dates and qualifications for the endorsement seem as though they were not well thought out or properly executed. What about those teachers, like me that should qualify and do not? In the school where I currently teach, there is at least one other kindergarten teacher affected by this endorsement and this is her first year of teaching. She just graduated and got her certification, and she is also expected to go back to school, take more classes and spend more money. If you calculate the percentage of teachers in my school alone at the kindergarten level who are affected by the endorsement, it is nearly forty percent. Two of the five teachers are affected by the early childhood endorsement. I am unsure how all kindergarten positions will be filled across the state next year if teachers are disqualified due to this endorsement.

The real issue here is that I love teaching the grade that I teach. One day I am qualified, and the next I am not unless I get this endorsement. It makes no sense why the Department of Education would deem this endorsement appropriate and necessary. There are too many "hoops to jump through" already in the field of education, and the Department of Education is doing the state a disservice because many great, dedicated, hardworking teachers like me will say no to this endorsement as I am. If the endorsement at the very least is not extended, I will have to switch to another grade for the 2009-2010 school year. That is unfortunate for the kids and for me. It does not seem right to disqualify teachers who enjoy doing what they do over something as trivial as an endorsement. This endorsement needs to be changed or extended. Teachers already in the field should not be dealing with this issue when they are already certified and qualified to teach.

The truth is that there are not very many teachers who enjoy, let alone love teaching kindergarten. The children are so young, impressionable, and needy at this age. Many teachers do not have the patience or motivation for this age group. So, why disqualify me from the grade level that I was meant to teach and love so much?

Anything that you can do to help me with this challenge would be greatly appreciated.
Thank you for your time and attention.

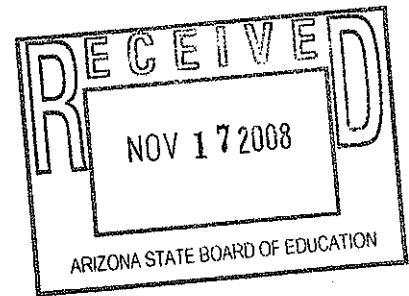
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Novak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Caroline Novak
(p) 602-569-1020

CC: Jeff Quisberg, Principal of Anasazi Elementary School
Susan Thomas, Assistant Principal of Anasazi Elementary School

Arizona State Board of Education
Vince Yanez, Executive Director
1535 West Jefferson, Bin 11
Phoenix, AZ 85007



October 30, 2008

Dear Mr. Yanez,

Thank you for accepting public comment regarding Early Childhood Certification and Endorsement changes expected July 1, 2009. I am a kindergarten teacher in Bullhead City, AZ, and I will not be permitted to continue teaching kindergarten under the new requirements.

I returned to college as a newly-divorced mother of three, and earned my degree through NAU's distant learning program, which provided courses in Bullhead City, Kingman, and Lake Havasu. In the final stretch of my coursework, ADE presented the new EC plan. I had always intended to teach kindergarten, but I could not possibly graduate as scheduled with the newly required courses (21 additional units!). NAU was able to change my practicum to include both preschool and kindergarten; however they had no solution for meeting the remaining requirements without adding 21 units just as I was preparing to graduate. I was one of those students caught in the middle. I would have 2 ½ years of teaching experience by July 2009 – **one semester** short of the 3 year eligibility to grandfather – and the only thing ADE and NAU could suggest was to wait and see if the rules changed.

So, here we are. I'd always wanted to teach kindergarten. I returned to college to achieve that goal, and succeeded. My students make great progress in my classroom. Last year, all of my students exceeded benchmark on DIBELS end-of-year testing. I am a highly qualified teacher and I love what I do. It is discouraging that unless changes are made, this is the last year I will be eligible to teach kindergarten in AZ. Because I live in the tri-state area, I am fortunate to have CA and NV as other options, but my current school, district, and home state are certainly my preference. I'm sure there are many other teachers in similar circumstances without such options.

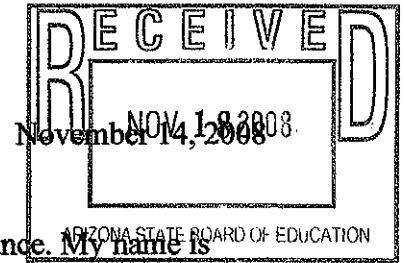
I am in support of extending the implementation deadline to 2012. When this mess started, NAU said they (along with all AZ universities) were changing the curriculum so upcoming graduates would have the requirements embedded in their teacher program. You'll have your EC teachers graduating by 2012. Unfortunately, that still will not help me or the other students that were caught in the dead zone of the first timeline. The only way to correct this oversight is to implement another grandfather clause for those teachers that have 3 or more years experience prior to the new deadline. You will retain many **experienced**, qualified teachers and our students will reap the rewards.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Yvonne M. Spencer
Sunrise Elementary School

Sarah Taylor Savale
6505 East Osborn Road #234
Scottsdale, AZ 85251



Dear Mr. Yanez,

I am writing this letter as an Arizona educator in need of your assistance. My name is Sarah Taylor Savale and I teach kindergarten at Anasazi Elementary School in Scottsdale Unified School District #48.

I attended the University of Arizona from 2004-2008. I graduated from the University of Arizona with a degree in Elementary Education. In May 2008 I received my teacher certificate through the Arizona Department of Education.

I completed my student teaching semester in a first grade classroom. I am currently teaching kindergarten during the 2008-2009 school year and am enjoying it tremendously! I was looking forward to many more years in the kindergarten classroom, but I have been recently informed that there is an Early Childhood Endorsement that I must attain by July, 2009 in order to continue teaching kindergarten.

Because I have not been teaching for three years my only option to receive the endorsement is to take twenty-one credit hours of classes in Early Childhood Education, spend four semester hours student teaching in a birth-pre school classroom and four semester hours student teaching in a kindergarten-grade three classroom. As a first year teacher, it is logistically and financially impossible for me to take 21 credit hours and complete another student teaching by July, 2009.

When I contacted the Arizona Department of Education, they informed me that I would not even be considered as a candidate to teach Kindergarten next year even if I was in the process of obtaining my Early Childhood Endorsement. Considering that I have only been teaching for four months, I don't see how it would be feasible for me to fully complete all of the requirements needed for the endorsement.

The reason that I am so passionate that the Endorsement date be moved back is because I love teaching kindergarten. I just received my K-8 Teaching Certificate a few months ago and now I am being told that less than a year later part of my certificate is no longer valid. Please do not disqualify me and many other teachers from teaching the grade we love. Anything that you can do to help me with this challenge would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

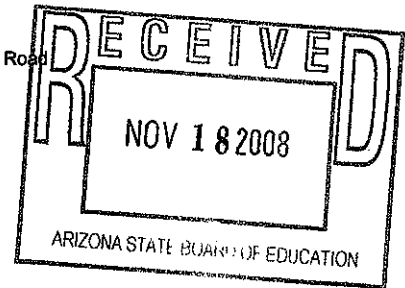
Taylor Savale

Taylor Savale
tsavale@susd.org
(p) 602-692-9686

Ms. Lisa A. Fredrickson
Kindergarten Teacher
Kyrene de las Lomas

November 16, 2008

1416 E. Desert Trumpet Road
Phoenix, AZ 85048



Vince Yanez
Executive Director, Arizona State Board of Education
1535 W. Jefferson
Bin #11
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Mr. Yanez,

I am writing this letter to ask that you postpone the ruling that a teacher needs an endorsement to teach Kindergarten. I understand that the ruling would have the new requirements effective summer 2009. I am asking that it be postponed until 2012.

I recently moved here from Indiana, where I received my Elementary Education Degree in 2005. Upon arrival in Arizona I was very fortunate to receive a Kindergarten Teaching position in the Kyrene School District. I love my job and I believe I am quite good at it. I would appreciate the additional time it would take for me to obtain the requirements to continue teaching Kindergarten.

Additionally, I am aware of many teachers that are in a similar situation as myself. They too would lose their jobs this summer, and I am wondering if there are enough certified teachers to fill our positions. It is hard for me to speak for other teachers, but I know that given the opportunity, I would do whatever it would take from 2009 to 2012 to fulfill any requirements to teach Kindergarten.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa A. Fredrickson".

Ms. Lisa A. Fredrickson
Kyrene de las Lomas
Kindergarten Teacher

Meneses, Erina

From: Caroline Novak [CNovak@susd.org]
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2008 3:34 PM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: Early Childhood Endorsement
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

*Caroline E. Novak
3837 East Carol Ann Way
Phoenix, AZ 85032*

November 10, 2008

Dear Mr. Yanez,

I am writing this letter as an Arizona educator in need of your assistance. My name is Caroline Eggert Novak and I teach kindergarten at Anasazi Elementary School in Scottsdale Unified School District #48.

I began my educational endeavors in Arizona back in 2001 when I came from the East Coast to attend Arizona State University. I received a Bachelors Degree from Arizona State in 2005, and decided to continue my education by attending Northern Arizona University. I received a Master of Education degree in Elementary Education in December of 2006. In January 2007 I received my teacher certificate through the Arizona Department of Education.

I interned and completed my student teaching semester in a kindergarten classroom, and then taught kindergarten for the 2007-2008 school year and I am currently teaching kindergarten during the 2008-2009 school year. It has become my passion! However, I have recently been informed that there is an Early Childhood Endorsement that I must attain by July, 2009 in order to continue teaching kindergarten. There are many reasons that I am having a difficult time with this new educational enforcement.

One problem that I have with this endorsement is how much is being asked of teachers who would like to teach kindergarten. The list of qualifications for the endorsement is long, costly and unattainable for many. Here is why; the endorsement states that those teachers who would like to receive the endorsement must take twenty-one credit hours of classes in Early Childhood Education, spend four semester hours student teaching in a birth-pre school classroom and four semester hours student teaching in a kindergarten-grade three classroom. I am not sure how any teacher would have time to do these things on top of teaching all day.

In order for a teacher to be exempt from attaining this endorsement and still be qualified to teach kindergarten, one has to have a valid teaching certificate as of July 1, 2006 and "have a minimum of three years infant/toddler, preschool or kindergarten-grade three classroom teaching experience within ten years prior to July 1, 2009." Additionally one has to have a passing score on the Early Childhood

11/19/2008

Subject Knowledge portion of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment (AEPA).

www.azed.gov/certification. I am not exempt from having to get this endorsement for two reasons; the first is that I received my teaching certificate in January, 2007, and secondly that I will have only been teaching kindergarten for two and a half years when the deadline of July, 2009 is upon us, not three years as stated necessary for exemption.

I am displeased that the Arizona Department of Education is enforcing this endorsement. I have a Masters Degree in Elementary Education where I am certified K-8, and somehow this is still not enough. I have also taken the Early Childhood Subject Knowledge Test and passed it. I currently have twenty-eight thousand dollars in loans from graduate school and I simply cannot spend more time and money on certification hurdles. Financially, this is not feasible for me to do. I feel that having a Masters Degree should exempt me from having to get this endorsement. Not only that, but at the end of this school year I will have had two years experience teaching kindergarten, as well as a semester student teaching in kindergarten, and another semester long-term substitute teaching in a kindergarten classroom. I feel that I am more than qualified to teach kindergarten, and maybe even more sufficiently qualified than other teachers who will be exempt from the endorsement due to the fact that they taught for one half a year longer than I did, or that they received their teaching certificate six months before me.

The cut-off dates and qualifications for the endorsement seem as though they were not well thought out or properly executed. What about those teachers, like me that should qualify and do not? In the school where I currently teach, there is at least one other kindergarten teacher affected by this endorsement and this is her first year of teaching. She just graduated and got her certification, and she is also expected to go back to school, take more classes and spend more money. If you calculate the percentage of teachers in my school alone at the kindergarten level who are affected by the endorsement, it is nearly forty percent. Two of the five teachers are affected by the early childhood endorsement. I am unsure how all kindergarten positions will be filled across the state next year if teachers are disqualified due to this endorsement.

The real issue here is that I love teaching the grade that I teach. One day I am qualified, and the next I am not unless I get this endorsement. It makes no sense why the Department of Education would deem this endorsement appropriate and necessary. There are too many "hoops to jump through" already in the field of education, and the Department of Education is doing the state a disservice because many great, dedicated, hardworking teachers like me will say no to this endorsement as I am. If the endorsement at the very least is not extended, I will have to switch to another grade for the 2009-2010 school year. That is unfortunate for the kids and for me. It does not seem right to disqualify teachers who enjoy doing what they do over something as trivial as an endorsement. This endorsement needs to be changed or extended. Teachers already in the field should not be dealing with this issue when they are already certified and qualified to teach.

The truth is that there are not very many teachers who enjoy, let alone love teaching kindergarten. The children are so young, impressionable, and needy at this age. Many teachers do not have the patience or motivation for this age group. So, why disqualify me from the grade level that I was meant to teach and love so much?

Anything that you can do to help me with this challenge would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Caroline Novak
(p) 602-569-1020

11/19/2008

CC: Jeff Quisberg, Principal of Anasazi Elementary School

11/19/2008

Meneses, Erina

From: hs480@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2008 9:29 AM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: Early Childhood Endorsement - Attn. Vince Yanez
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

Attention- Vince Yanez

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

Sincerely,
Heather Schneider
Scottsdale, AZ
hs480@aol.com

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11/19/2008

Meneses, Erina

From: Mandi Carter [mandicarter3@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2008 11:10 PM
To: sandra.stone@nau.edu; State Board [INBOX]
Subject: petition letter
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

Hi Sandra,

I got your email from Lori VanHaren. The following is a petition letter about the Early Childhood Endorsement extension from some Scottsdale School district employees. Thank you for your time.

Mandi Carter

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

11/19/2008

Meneses, Erina

From: Valerie Funk [valeriefunk2003@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2008 12:16 PM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: Early Childhood Endorsement
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

Sincerely,
Valerie Funk

11/19/2008

Meneses, Erina

From: Kathryn Anderson [kathya@susd.org]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2008 8:02 AM
To: State Board [INBOX]

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

Kathy Anderson
First Grade
Anasazi Elementary School
(480) 484-7300 x 5308
kathya@susd.org

Meneses, Erina

From: Barbara Janger [bjanger@susd.org]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2008 6:50 AM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: Early Childhood Endorsement
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement.

Sincerely,
Barbara Janger
5th grade teacher, Anasazi Elementary

School

11/19/2008

Meneses, Erina

From: fkostes@cox.net
Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2008 9:30 AM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: Early Childhood Endorsement

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

Sincerely, France Kostes

Meneses, Erina

From: Stephaine Janikis [sjanikis@susd.org]
Sent: Friday, November 14, 2008 3:21 PM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: Early Childhood Extension requirement Extension
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

November 14, 2008

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July 2009 to July 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Janikis

Anasazi Elementary School

Meneses, Erina

From: Sherry Grant (Anasazi) [sgrant@susd.org]
Sent: Friday, November 14, 2008 3:15 PM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: Early Childhood Education Endorsement
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

Sincerely,

Sherry D. Grant
Anasazi teacher librarian
480-484-7306
sgrant@susd.org

11/19/2008

Meneses, Erina

From: Joanne Simons [JSimons@susd.org]
Sent: Friday, November 14, 2008 2:56 PM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: new requirements for early childhood education
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple
Attachments: kindergarten teachers.doc

11/19/2008

To whom it may concern at the AZ Dept. of Education:

I am extremely concerned about the recent new requirements for kindergarten teachers are causing great hardship to some excellent and hardworking teachers at our school and throughout Arizona. Teachers work extremely hard, and it is just a shame that good teachers will be let go because of an unfair rule. Current teachers who have positions and are being successful should be exempt from these new requirements. It is understandable to require new teachers who have not yet completed their prerequisites to teaching to receive training in Early Childhood, but please do not penalize teachers who are already doing a wonderful job.

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

Sincerely,

Joanne Simons

4th grade teacher

Anasazi Elementary School

SUSD

Meneses, Erina

From: Stefanie Whitten [swhitten@susd.org]
Sent: Friday, November 14, 2008 2:44 PM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: early childhood education endorsement

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

Letter

I am writing this letter requesting that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement from July, 2009 to July, 2012. There are several teachers that I know who have recently finished college and are now launching their teaching careers. For many of these teachers funds are very limited and additional expenses for the Early Childhood Endorsement is a hardship. There are a limited number of teachers who are committed to teaching kindergarten level students and we are hopeful that these teachers stay committed to this age group of children. Please do not penalize or make it more challenging for those who have committed to teaching kindergarten without considering the time commitment for additional coursework, shortness of timeline for completion of the coursework or the additional expenses to complete the coursework. For teachers who already have Arizona state teacher certification, please consider waving such additional requirements or exempting them from the required early childhood endorsement. If the endorsement is to be required please consider an extension of the timeline to meet these requirements.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Whitten
Kindergarten
Anasazi
(480)484-7300 ext. 5305
swhitten@susd.org

Meneses, Erina

From: Brian Potter [bpotter@susd.org]
Sent: Friday, November 14, 2008 11:45 AM
To: State Board [INBOX]
Subject: Extend Early Childhood Endorsement Deadline
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Purple

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a School Psychologist who works with teachers that would not be able to return to their jobs without an extension to the Early Childhood Endorsement.

While I am in support of this endorsement policy for any teacher who works with young children, I also wish to express my desire for the Department of Education to allow current teachers more time to fulfill this requirement. I feel the current deadline presents several problems for schools, and given that many of the teachers affected are just starting their careers the additional expense it presents needs to be parceled out over a longer period. Without an extension I am not only concerned about cutting down the already limited pool of teachers who are committed to kindergarten level students, but also that given the current due date, those teachers who will fill in the vacancies we may see next year will actually subvert the intention of the endorsement. Given time, I feel current teachers who are seeking this endorsement will act in a professional manner according to the intention of the policy by seeking out quality courses and experiences that will enable them to provide a better environment for young children. Without the extension, I fear that teachers committed to these students will either be unable to fulfill the requirements in time and be forced out of their position or scramble in and effort to fulfill them on paper, but in doing so compromise the intent of establishing the endorsement itself. Schools may then see quality kindergarten teachers who love their children and work well with them leave, only to be replaced with teachers who are able to demonstrate the Department of Education's list of qualifications but that possess none of the essential skills or understanding of young children that the endorsement is meant to signify.

I am therefore writing you to support that the Arizona Department of Education extend the requirements for the Early Childhood Endorsement out beyond the current due date of July, 2009.

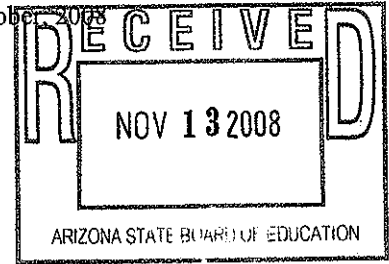
Sincerely,

Brian Potter
School Psychologist
Cheyenne T.S. 484-5609
Anasazi E.S. 484-7313

11/19/2008

Kristin Schoolmeester
Coyote Canyon Elementary District 15
Bullhead City, AZ 86442

October 2008



Arizona State Board of Education
Vince Yanez, Executive Director
1535 West Jefferson, Bin 11
Phoenix, AZ 85007

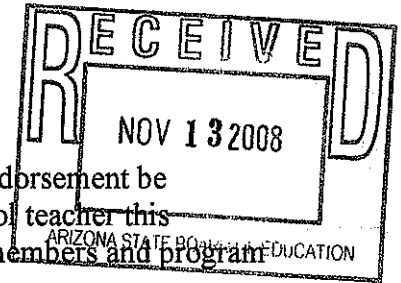
To whom it may concern,

I feel that I am highly qualified to teach Kindergarten. This is my second year teaching Kindergarten. I got a degree in Elementary Education with a **specialization in preprimary**. I took almost as many preprimary and child development classes as the Early Childhood Education program. I do not feel I should have to have an endorsement from AZ to qualify for a Kindergarten teacher position.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristin Schoolmeester".

Dear Vince Yanez,



I am writing to request that the deadline for the Early Childhood Endorsement be extended to 2012. As an early childhood special education preschool teacher this endorsement directly affects me. It also affects the students, team members and program in which I work.

I have worked hard over the past three years to get off of my emergency certificate and to receive my early childhood special education certificate. I have taken numerous classes that were required by the Arizona Department of Education and have passed three separate AEPA exams. I have gone above and beyond the state requirements by taking additional classes to learn more about the field, as well as enrolled in a graduate program at Arizona State University. I was elated this past spring when I received my provisional certificate in the mail!

However, this is still not good enough for the Arizona Department of Education. I am required to student teach for at least four credit hours in K-3 in order to receive my early childhood endorsement (which is necessary because I can have up to four typically developing children in each of my classes). But how can I be complete this requirement while working full time and going to graduate school? I cannot just take off two months of work and summer school sessions are too short to meet the four credit criteria. It would also be unfair for the school district to hire a sub in order for me to complete these hours. Plus, it is really the students who will be hurt because I would miss a significant amount of instructional time.

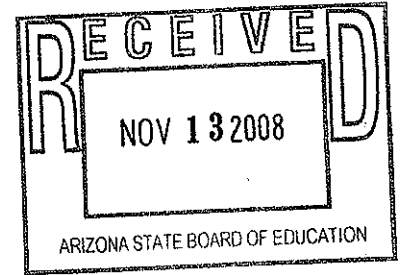
By extending the deadline, it would be more manageable for me to complete the student teaching hours I need. Another possibility would be to extend the grandfather clause to people who got their certificates between 2006-20008 and work with the state universities to design programs that would fulfill the new early childhood endorsement requirements for 2009 or 2012 and beyond.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. It is my hope that changes will be made to the early childhood endorsement guidelines so I can continue working in the field that I love.

Sincerely,

Rachel Cohen
Highly Qualified Early Childhood Special Education Teacher

3 November 2008



Dear Mr. Yanez,

I am currently a pre-kindergarten instructor and absolutely love what I do. My 4 and 5 year olds are my motivation every day because they love to learn and I love to teach them. I have my bachelor's degree and have owned a child care center in the past. This is my 5th year in the program and I look forward to continuing in my position in that it is my niche. This being the case, I would urge you to postpone the deadline for teachers to be certified. I would like to keep working while taking course work instead of quitting to take an accelerated program, which I have already investigated with no success. Cost has also been a factor. It would help to spread out the financial burden as well and hopefully make it a reality.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Hope Briscoe".

M. Hope Briscoe

Yanez, Vincient

From: Tricia Shaw [tshaw@wickenburg.k12.az.us]
Sent: Monday, November 03, 2008 5:19 PM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: Early childhood endorsement

Dear Sir,

I would like to offer my opinion on moving the deadline for this endorsement to the year 2012. I believe there would be a number of rural districts that would benefit from moving this deadline to 2012. It can be tough for the smaller sized districts to attract teachers and there are many people who do not want to teach Kindergarten. It is hard to find qualified, worthy people who want to be in a Kindergarten classroom. Kindergarten is not an easy grade to teach! I think it is very important to hang on to the experienced teachers who are teaching Kindergarten and who love what they do.

Thank you for you consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Patricia Shaw
Wickenburg Unified School District

Yanez, Vincient

From: Joyce Henneman [jhenneman@wickenburg.k12.az.us]
Sent: Wednesday, November 05, 2008 7:19 AM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: Early Childhood Endorsement

To Whom It May Concern:

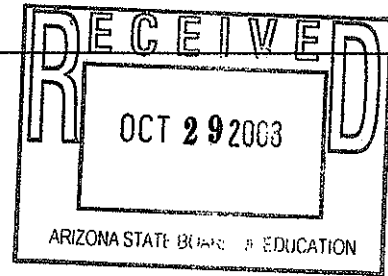
I was recently told that there is talk about moving the deadline for the Early Education Endorsement requirement to 2012. I am currently a Kindergarten teacher in a rural school setting. Even though I have my degree in early childhood, I still support the move to postpone the deadline for this endorsement to the year 2012. I believe there would be a number of rural districts that would benefit from moving this deadline to 2012. It can be tough for the smaller sized districts to attract teachers and there are many people who do not want to teach Kindergarten. In my experience it is hard to find qualified, worthy people who want to be in a Kindergarten classroom. Kindergarten is not an easy grade to teach and I know this from experience! I think it is vital to keep experienced teachers who are teaching Kindergarten and who love what they do.

If you have any further questions for me, feel free to contact me at this email address.
Thank you for you time.

Joyce Henneman
WUSD #9

KELLY SIMMONS

5124 W. Trotter Trail
Phoenix, AZ 85083
Phone (623) 518-9058
kelscreate22@aol.com
kelly.simmons@dvusd.org



October 26, 2008

Executive Director: Vince Yanez
1535 West Jefferson, Bin 11
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Mr. Yanez,

I am a Pre-Kindergarten instructor in the Deer Valley Unified School District. I have worked and volunteered in education for the last ten years. Even with my vast experience, I will soon be unqualified to continue in my present position when the ADE begins requiring all preschool teachers to be certified. I am writing in hopes of your support in delaying the deadline for certification so those in my position may have more time to complete our education. Raising a family, working full time, and continuing our education concurrently is a tremendous task. Allowing people like me more time to finish our education will make balancing these three equally important components of our lives easier. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Yanez, Vincient

From: Tawny Smith [talysonsmith@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, October 27, 2008 10:39 PM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: Early Childhood Endorsement Requirement

To Whom It May Concern:

Personally, I think that there should be some type of "grandfather" law that considers a "highly qualified teacher", a highly qualified teacher in the appropriate grades. If an educator has had many years of experience in primary grades, in this case, and has proven to bring success to a child's education, this should be enough to prove their competence and credentials. The state of Arizona should reconsider this requirement because all it does is place unnecessary stress on your child's Kindergarden teacher. Is that what you really want? Trust your principals and professionals to place requirements on the staff and to enforce them within the schools. Trust your teachers.

Happy Learning!
Tawny Smith

Yanez, Vincient

From: pfmav@cox.net
Sent: Monday, October 27, 2008 2:38 PM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Cc: Kwendi3525@cs.com
Subject: Early childhood certification

Mr. Yanez,

I am writing to you in regards to the Early Childhood endorsement. I believe this is a good idea, however teachers who have had previous experience in teaching Kindergarten should be "grandfathered." Experience in other states should also be considered as long as the teacher is in good standing. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Pam Mavroudis

Yanez, Vincient

From: Carrie Murphy [camurphy@wickenburg.k12.az.us]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2008 1:44 PM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: Early childhood endorsement

To whom it may concern,

I would like to recommend that the State of Arizona consider prior experience in teaching when looking at the requirements for endorsements in Early childhood. I believe if a licensed teacher moves to this state and has taught kindergarten for three or more years, he/she should be "grandfathered" in and not mandated to take fifteen plus credits in early childhood. If a test is required, he/she should be allowed to take the test and with a passing score, be given the early childhood endorsement. Thank you for considering my opinion. Carrie Murphy

Yanez, Vincient

From: Patricia Dimino [pdimino@wickenburg.k12.az.us]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2008 1:26 PM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: Early Childhood Certificate/Endorsement

To Whom It May Concern:

I currently hold an Early Childhood Certificate for the State of Arizona and I understand that you are re-considering the endorsement requirements for Teachers in Kindergarten. While there are many unique features in the teaching of kindergarten, most elementary teachers are very qualified to teach this grade level. Perhaps, teachers with out-of-state experience at the pre-school or primary level with a degree in Elementary Education could receive an endorsement or at least be "grandfathered" ("grandmothered"?) in.

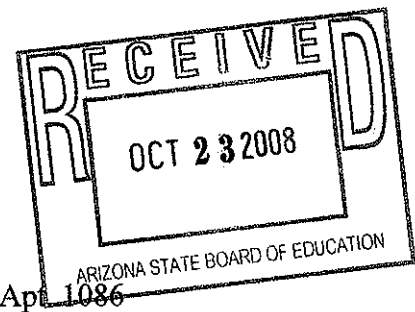
Please take this into consideration when you are deciding this important issue.

Thank you for your time.

Patricia Dimino
Teacher
Festival Foothills Elementary School
Wickenburg Unified School District

October 16, 2008

Sue Murtha
7205 W. McDowell Rd., Apt 1086
Phoenix, AZ 85035



Arizona State Board of Education, Bin 11
1535 West Jefferson St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Board of Education members,

Thank you for allowing for, even asking for, input concerning changing the qualifications to teach kindergarten in Arizona. I am very much in favor of changing the required date of having an Early Childhood Endorsement from the current July 2009 to 2012 or 2013. I was recruited in Colorado, having taught there for five years, to come to teach in Arizona for the current school year 2008-2009.

I never knew of this requirement when my current principal placed me in a kindergarten position. I actually had hoped to keep this position for many years. I don't really think I would have made the move to teach in Arizona having known of these insurmountable obstacles in keeping my job.

Although I teach all day kindergarten in an Arizona elementary school this year, it will no longer be possible for me to keep that job if I must meet all the current criteria by July 2009. True, in my many hours of undergraduate and graduate school, I have many of the classes already required. However, the Arizona Department of Education said I need to have four more classes, plus student teach in preschool for four credit hours (equivalent to a semester).

This brings me to request the second change to the criteria for the Early Childhood Endorsement in Arizona: those four required credit hours student teaching in a preschool or lower grade. I did my student teaching in kindergarten in Colorado. (Thus I have fulfilled those four credit hours of student teaching.) I am currently teaching kindergarten in Arizona with good remarks from my principal's first evaluation. I can not break my contract and start student teaching in preschool for a semester in order to meet these Arizona Early Childhood Endorsement criteria.

Not only would it be wrong for me to break my teaching contract to do this student teaching, I also can not afford to student teach (without pay) for a semester. I should also mention that my current school district would not even want me to teach next year if I broke my teaching contract. Thus, I am placed in a position that I can not resolve. Only the State Board of Education can resolve this dilemma, for me.

Recently when I talked to one representative at the Arizona Department of Education, she said the preschool student teaching requirement was not reasonable since there were not many locations to host all the necessary teachers who did not meet these criteria. In other words, supply (preschool teaching opportunities) does not meet demand (teachers who must obtain this experience in order to keep their current jobs.)

I feel very badly about doing a good job, but being unable to keep that job. I am not the only new teacher to Arizona in this situation. I don't have the data on other teachers with the same problem. However, in my district, Phoenix District One, I have gone to meetings with other kindergarten teachers who, like me, are new to teaching in Arizona. They may have these qualifications; however, it is doubtful.

This is only one district that I can speak for in Arizona. Consider all the teachers currently teaching kindergarten, even the ones who are not new to Arizona. How many of them have, or can obtain this Early Childhood Endorsement by the July 2009 deadline? I don't have the data or statistics. It would be interesting if someone could gather them, however. Perhaps a survey is in order.


If the current deadline is maintained and there are many current Arizona kindergarten teachers who do not qualify to teach it next year, who will teach kindergarten in the Arizona schools? Again, out of-state-recruiting is a possibility, but only if those teachers are told the requirements and someone checks to see if they have met them. This could be quite a problem and a hardship for all Arizona public schools. There would have to be some kind of allowance granted or exception made to fill all the Arizona kindergarten teaching positions.

I'm sorry I don't know when this deadline of July 2009 was set. Perhaps at the time, it was considered a reasonable allowable period for teachers to obtain the endorsement. However, in my case, and perhaps many others, as you can see, it is not a reasonable amount of time to comply.

Consider also that many teachers who may have been teaching kindergarten at the time of this decision for a July 2009 compliance date may no longer be teaching kindergarten. They may have retired; they may have moved out of state; they may have moved to another grade level to teach. There are many new kindergarten teachers in Arizona.

I thank you for your time in reading my letter. I thank you for the opportunity to speak on my own personal behalf, and hopefully on the behalf of many kindergarten teachers who have not taken the initiative to contact you. Consider us all, please. Our fate awaits your wise decision.

Sincerely,


Sue Murtha

Yanez, Vincient

From: MAC Terry Downey [downey@cfsd16.org]
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2008 1:14 PM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: Early Childhood Education

Mr. Yanez,
Catalina Foothills School District fully supports the recommendation to extend the Early Childhood Endorsement and certification requirements to 2012. We don't believe enough has been done or that the structure is in place to ensure that we have enough endorsed teachers by 2009. In addition, we believe it will be hard to meet the 2012 deadline if we don't do something about the requirement that a teacher seeking this endorsement have two practicum placements—one in preschool and one in kindergarten. In our experience, teachers in training are finding this requirement onerous and are therefore coming out of the university only prepared to teach 1-6th grades.

Thank you for giving our concerns your consideration.

Terry Downey
Associate Superintendent



ARIZONA CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION

October 10, 2008

Mr. Vince Yanez, Executive Director
Arizona State Board of Education
1535 West Jefferson Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Mr. Yanez,

I am writing to provide public comments on the early childhood education certification rule on behalf of the Arizona Child Care Association (ACCA).

ACCA believes that the certification requirements that are currently in rule and the modifications that are being proposed are in direct conflict with ARS 15-1251 and the intent of the statute as they apply to private preschools funded under the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG). In addition, we do not believe that the impact on parents, pupils who attend private preschools, and non-profit and for profit centers that provide these services was adequately considered.

In 1994 the legislature allowed private licensed child care centers to receive funding and participate in the preschool program. The statute requires school districts to "allow at least up to 50% of pupils" to receive preschool services from a federally funded or private child care provider of their parent's own choosing. The only statutory requirements are that the provider be licensed by the DHS Office of Child Care Licensure and nationally accredited.

The statute allows any eligible provider that meets these two requirements to participate in the program if they are in or near the district and are willing to provide services at costs similar to that paid to others. The statute specifies that districts must limit their contracts with private providers to financial agreements. It is clear that the legislature intended the program to allow parental choice of private providers who met the explicit statutory requirements. The requirement for teacher certification will add an additional condition for participation that is not authorized in the statute.

A requirement to hire certified teachers will pose an insurmountable barrier for most private preschools who cannot afford the additional costs associated with hiring certified teachers. Public school and federally funded Head Start programs are already able to pay teachers 65% more than private providers who rely on parent fees or DES. The vast majority of private centers have a small number of ECBG funded children, with half of the private preschools serving 2 or fewer children. Parents of the other private pay and DES subsidized children are not able to afford the additional costs to offset the requirement to hire a certified teacher.

2100 North Central Avenue Suite 225, Phoenix, Arizona 85004-1400

Phone: 602.252.3845

Fax: 602.252.8664

E-mail: bruceliggett@azcca.org

Website: www.azcca.org

Loss of the ECBG funded children will reduce revenue in private child care centers impacting the overall operation and quality of the preschool. A requirement for teacher certification in private preschools will effectively preclude private participation in the program.

The ECBG preschool program only serves children from low income families. These parents will lose preschool options and choices of settings that meet their family needs in terms of curriculum, location, hours of operation that support the parent's work schedule, and care for siblings.

ACCA has already identified a number of procedural requirements and administrative restrictions at the local level that are barriers for private provider participation. In 2007, only 9 of the 54 districts that used ECBG funded preschools used private preschools and less than 4% of all ECBG funded preschool children were served in private preschools. ADE has attempted to address these issues but has limited authority and resources to monitor, provide oversight or enforce all aspects of the statutory provisions for private preschool participation. If teacher certification were added as a requirement, it is not clear how districts would comply with the statutory requirements for districts to notify private providers and provide parents with a list of private providers located in the district.

We believe that the proposed modification to extend the effective date of the early childhood certification provides an opportunity for the State Board of Education to review the ECBG statutory language and intent, more fully explore the impact of the proposed certification requirement on stakeholders including pupils, parents, and private providers, and reconsider the certification requirement for private providers.

ACCA supports the provision of quality preschool services and the right of parents to choose the preschool program that best meets their family's needs. While teacher certification should not be required for private preschools, as an alternative, perhaps the Board could require or encourage districts to provide increased funding and a sufficient number of children as an incentive for private preschools to hire certified teachers.

Your consideration of these issues is appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any clarification or additional information.

Sincerely,



Bruce Liggett
Executive Director

cc: Jennifer Pollard, Assistant Attorney General
Amy Corriveau, ADE

"The Arizona Child Care Association is a professional non-profit organization of licensed private non-profit and proprietary child care centers. The ACCA mission is to promote accessible, affordable, and quality early care and education that meets the needs of Arizona's families and children."

2100 North Central Avenue Suite 225, Phoenix, Arizona 85004-1400

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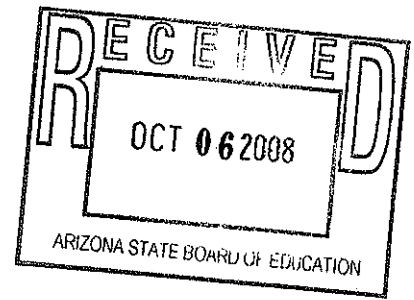
E-mail: bruce@azcca.org

Website: www.azcca.org



Melissa Bianco
1137 N. Conifer Rd. Flagstaff, AZ 86001

October 3, 2008



Dear Mr. Yanez,

Upon renewing my certificate in August of this year, I was informed that I had 11 months to complete my early childhood endorsement. I took the AEPA course and passed and will have three years of teaching experience by June of this year. Then, I was informed that because my certificate from 1996 expired, and I renewed it 5 weeks after the arbitrary cut off date, I was not to be granted that endorsement under the grandfather rule. In order for me to receive this endorsement I will have to complete a 4 semester hour supervised preschool teaching internship somehow while I am teaching kindergarten full time, raising three children and supporting a family

I feel this is an unreasonable demand and will cause undue hardship on my family and possible loss of my job. The education is not available in Northern Arizona and in addition, there is not enough time to complete this internship before the deadline. This would cause the loss of my job and a career that I love. I cannot rely of the possibility of being moved to another grade level in a district that is very difficult to get into in the first place. I value my current employment.

I would request that you extend the deadline to 2012 as it has been proposed and/or take out the preschool internship. I would request that professional development courses be made available with time off to further my early childhood educational needs. This would allow me to continue in my career and provide for my family without unnecessary hardship.

Thank you for your time. I speak for many teachers in similar circumstances and we hope for a decision in our favor.

Sincerely,

Melissa Bianco

Yanez, Vincient

From: Jennifer Martinez [JMartinez@santacruz.k12.az.us]
Sent: Wednesday, October 08, 2008 8:22 AM
To: Yanez, Vincient
Subject: early childhood endorsement

Mr. Yanez,

I am writing to you in regards to the new Early Childhood Endorsement kindergarten teachers need to have by 2012. I know when the deadline was in 2009 teachers had to have three years of teaching experience by July 2006 and I just missed that deadline. Now that the deadline was moved to 2012 does that three years teaching move to July 2009 and then I will be waived by the Grandfather Clause? I am currently going on my fifth year of teaching kindergarten and I have my Masters Degree in Early Childhood Education from NAU plus my Bachelors Degree in Elementary Education. I am in debt as it is in students loans and trying to make ends meet on a teachers salary and I would hate to have to pay money to take a test to prove to the state that I am more qualified than I already am now. I really don't think it's fair for someone with my altitude of education not be considered for the Grandfathering and waiving the test. Many teachers that work with me had to pay \$60 and sign a paper and they were done because they met the 3 years of teaching by July 06. What are the next steps I have to do to get my certificate without having to pay more money unless its for the certificate application I know I have to pay that one anyways. The state should really consider that teachers don't have a large salary and having to take test after test after test is really putting many of us in financial crisis and our career is on the line. I wouldn't be writing this email if I wasn't Highly Qualified, as you may see I am.

Sincerely,

Jennifer C. Martinez
San Cayetano Elementary
Kindergarten Teacher